

Chapter No. 2077
13/SS26/R231
MC/AS/SG

SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 511

Originated in Senate Liz Welch Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 511

~~A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF
CELEBRATED MISSISSIPPI AUTHOR ELLEN DOUGLAS.~~

WHEREAS, Ellen Douglas, a celebrated Author whose novel "Apostles of Light" was a 1973 National Book Award nominee, died November 7, 2012, at the age of 91 in her native hometown Jackson, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, born Josephine Ayres Haxton, the accomplished author used the pen name "Ellen Douglas" in an effort to guard the privacy of her family. Douglas' Mississippi-set work dealt candidly with race relations, families and the role of women; and

WHEREAS, having grown up in Hope, Arkansas, and Alexandria, Louisiana, Mrs. Douglas was said to have spent summers with her grandparents in Natchez, Mississippi. She graduated from the University of Mississippi in 1942 and went on to write 11 books, including six novels and several collections of short stories. As Douglas often used her Mississippi surroundings for inspiration, *Apostles of Light* takes place in fictional Homochitto,

Mississippi, and is a complex novel about the mistreatment of

S. C. R. No. 511

13/SS26/R231

Page 1

residents at a home for the elderly. The town is used as a setting in many of her works; and

WHEREAS, in a 1980 oral history with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, cited by the *Associated Press*, Ellen Douglas said she was influenced by the "overwhelming hypnotic style" of Faulkner, who was living and writing in Oxford when she was a student. Mrs. Douglas won a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2008 from the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters. Some of her other works were *A Family's Affairs* and *Can't Quit You, Baby*; and

WHEREAS, Josephine Ayres Haxton was born July 12, 1921, in Natchez, Mississippi, grew up mostly in Alexandria, Louisiana, raised her family in Greenville, and lived for the last 30 years in Jackson. She is survived by her three sons: Richard Haxton, Brooks Haxton and Ayres Haxton; 7 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and stories of life as she saw it through a lens of growing up and living mostly in Mississippi. "It seems to me that her accomplishment in her writing was to observe the way people lived in the world that she knew best - the world of a small town in the South, particularly in Mississippi," Brooks said. Brooks said his mother's work chronicled important social developments of her time, which often involved relationships between races and genders. "She was just a terrific storyteller"; and

WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of this Mississippi storyteller who will be missed:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the life and legacy of celebrated Mississippi Author Ellen Douglas of Jackson, Mississippi, and extend our sympathy to her surviving family on her passing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to the surviving family of Ellen Douglas, forwarded to the Mississippi Arts Commission, and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
January 10, 2013



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January 15, 2013



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES